THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI BHASKAR ANNAJI MASODKAR): I have understood... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI ANAND PRAKASH GAUTAM: I want to make some separate submission. Whenever a statement by a witness is made in the presence of a lawyer, he can make a good cross-examination. Likewise, as these are important issues, the Members who are not present in the House... (*Interruptions*)

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI BHASKAR ANNAJI MASODKAR): You can study the statement... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI ANAND PRAKASH GAUTAM: Let us have the clarification on Monday at 12 O'clock.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI BHASKAR ANNAJI MASODKAR): Let us see the position... (*Interruptions*)

CHOWDHRY HARI SINGH (Uttar Pradesh): This is the view of the advocate... (*Interruptions*)

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI BHASKAR ANNAJI MASODKAR): Please understand. As the statement has already been made in the Lok Sabha, it does not look well that it is not made before us. Let us permit the statement... (*Interruptions*). We will do one thing. Whatever statements had been made in the Lok Sabha may be made here. The clarification will be thereafter and other statements will be postponed to Monday.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

I. Recent deaths in the Union Territory of Delhi due to the consumption of spurious drugs.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI M. M. JACOB): Sir, I wish to inform the Honourable Members of this august House about the recent tragedy in the Union Territory of Delhi which has so far claimed 199 lives.

At about 4.15 p.m. on 5-11-1991, information was received at Shalimar Bagh Police Station from the Hindu Rao Hospital that one person had been admitted in the hospital for treatment for poisoning. Another person in similar condition was admitted at 7.55 p.m. on the same day. Subsequently, both the persons died and inquest proceedings were held by the Police. Inquiries revealed that both the persons had consumed the same 'Sura'.

On 6-11-1991 reports form Hindu Rao Hospital were received at Police Stations Jahangirpuri, Adarsh Nagar, Shilimar Bagh, Ashok Vihar and Model Town that some residents from their police stations had been admitted to the hospital for treatment for unknown poisoning. Inquiries revealed that all of them had consumed an Ayurvedic medicine called 'Karpoov Asav'.

Inquiries by Delhi Police showed that this 'Karpoov Asav' was manufactured by a firm called Karnal Pharmacy which had its unit at Ghaziabad in Uttar Pradesh. The Ghaziabad Police was immediately requested by the Delhi Police to locate the firm and seize all its products. On the morning of 7th November, 1991, the factory was sealed by the Delhi Police with the assistance of the local Police and all the stocks seized. It was found that the unit was running in an open shed in an unhygenic condition.

Simultaneously all police stations in Delhi were asked to look for retail outlets and distributors of 'Sura' and impound all bottles in the market.

The samples of the spurious drug which caused deaths were sent to the Central Forensic Science Laboratory and the Labo-

ratory of the Excise Department of Delhi Administration. Both the Laboratories confirmed that this 'Karpoov Asav' contained methyl alcohol. Three of the four proprietors of the firm have been arrested alongwith the main distributors. One of the proprietors is absconding.

So far 199 persons have died and 63 are presently admitted in hospitals. 77 persons were discharged after treatment and 6, who were admitted in the hospitals, had left on their own against medical advice.

The Delhi police have carried out extensive raids and searches in the Capital resulting in the arrest of 93 persons so far. 337 criminal cases have been registered and 73087 'Sura' bottles seized. The Excise Department of the Delhi Administration has taken more than 100 samples from various sources. The Delhi Police and the Excise Department of Delhi Administraiton have sealed 13 shops of Ayurvedic medicines.

Inquiries revealed that the delinquent unit, M]s. Karnal Pharmacy, had earlier been given a manufacturing licence by the Directorate of Ayurvedic & Unani Medicines of the Government of Uttar Pradesh. Further inquiries show that the licence of the unit was not renewed after 31st December, 1988. It has also been revealed that in spite of the unit having no valid manufacturing licence after 31-12-1988, 4,000 litres of potable alcohol was continued to be allotted to this unit every year by the Excise Department of the Government of Uttar Pradesh. We have requested the Government of Uttar Pradesh to let us have all relevant details concerning the activities of this unit. Their reply is awaited.

An ex-gratia assistance of Rs. 10,000/- to the next of kin of each deceased and Rs. 5,000/- to each person rendered blind by the consumption of this spurious drug, has been sanctioned by the Delhi Administration.

The Delhi Administration has set up a one-Man Commission of Inquiry under the Chairmanship of Shri Jagdish Chandra, a retired Judge of the Delhi High Court under the Commission of Inquiry Act, 1952. This Commission is to inquire into the incident and its terms of reference include ascertaining the persons responsible for manufacture, preparation, sale and supply of the spurious drug; negligence if any, of authorities responsible for checking such drugs and to recommend measures to prevent recurrence of such incidents.

The Government is making every endeavour to vigorously pursue the investigation of the cases registered against the persons responsible for the manufacture and sale of the spurious drug.

The Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940, provides for certain regulatory mechanism for the manufacture, distribution and sale of drugs including Ayurvedic drugs. In order to ensure the standards of quality, the Act provides for regulation by Drug Inspectors, of the manufacture of drugs and of their sale, stocking and distribution etc. The Directorate General of Health Services has issued instructions on 14-11-1991 to all State Drug Controllers to ensure that manufacture of Ayurvedic, Siddha and Unani drug should conform to the laid down specifications and the Drug Inspectors must carry out in depth inspections of all manufacturing firms. The Union Ministry of Health has also issued instructions to the Delhi Administration and to the Government of Uttar Pradesh that manufacturers, stockists and vendors of spurious drugs manufactured and sold under the label of Ayurvedic drugs, should be prosecuted vigorously. Instructions have since been issued toall State Governments that rectified spirit may not be allowed to be used as a substitute for 'Prasana', which is one of the ingredients of 'Karpoor Asav'.

All possible action is being taken by the Government to prevent recurrence of such incidents in the future. All concerned departments of the Delhi Administration have been advised to exercise the utmost vigilance and directed to vigorously enforce the excise laws and to strictly implement the guidelines of the Union Health Minis-

[Shri M. M. Jacob]

try on the subject. Delhi Administration have also set up a high-powered committee to monitor the progress of follow-up action on raids conducted by the Enforcement Wing of the Excise Department and the Drug Controller's Organisation.

I am sure that the Honourable Members would join me in conveying our sympathies to the bereaved families.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI BHASKAR ANNAJI MASODKAR): Mr. Minister, you must take into account the difficulties of the Members. You should work out some modalities so that Members get enough time to study the statements.

SHRI M. M. JACOB: Sir, I am prepared to sit any time on Monday.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI BHASKAR ANNAJI MASODKAR): As you know, today being Friday, Members go away. (*Interruptions*). All right, make the other statement also. I just want to impress upon you the anxiety voiced here.

SHRI SANGH PRIYA GAUTAM (Uttar Pradesh): On Monday, Sir.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI BHASKAR ANNAJI MASODKAR): The other statement will be postponed.

II. The situation arising out of recent communal violence at Varanasi (U.P.).

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI M. M. JACOB): According to the information received from the State Government, the communal trouble at Varanasi started in the evening of 8 November, 1991 during a traditional religious procession for immersion of Kali idols. Clashes between the two communities broke out following an accidental injury to a person of another community from the fire crackers let off during the procession. Anti-social elements took advantage of the resentment generated by this incident to start looting and arson. Rumour-mongering by these elements led to incidents of brick-batting and stabbing between the two communities. Some persons coming out of a cinema hall also fell prey to this violence. These clashes resulted in the death of eight persons: four died on the spot and four succumbed four died on the spot and four succumbed persons were injured. Some shops suffered minor damage due to arson. Senior officers reached the spot on receiving information of the disturbances and brought the situation under control. Curfew was imposed in the areas of eight police stations as a precautionary measure.

The curfew was gradually relaxed from 11 November, 1991. However, violence erupted again on 13 November, 1991 when some people attacked the passengers of a tempo in Madanpura locality with knives and scissors; one woman was killed and 4 persons were injured. In Mohalla Janganbadi, a crowd belonging to one community collected and started shouting provocative slogans. In Mohalla Sunarpura and Revdi Talab, four incidents of stabbing took place. A bomb was also thrown at ADM (City) and SP (City) due to which one Orderly was hurt. During these fresh incidents, 7 persons were killed and 11 injured. Thereafter the process of arrests and searches was intensified.

According to the State Government, the curfew was tightened and the police also undertook house to house searches to unearth illicit arms, ammunition and explosives. The police have so far arrested 617 persons of which 302 belong to one community and 315 to the other community.

In all, 17 persons lost their lives and 26 persons received injuries during this period. Of the persons killed, one person who was in police custody died in a hospital; the DM Varanasi had ordered a magisterial inquiry into this death.

Police pickets have been set up in Varanasi city and intensive patrolling con-